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## **Reaffirming Los Angeles County's Commitment to Hospitality**

Responding to one of the worst humanitarian crises since World War II, the Board of Supervisors voted Tuesday to reaffirm Los Angeles County's commitment to hospitality while also ensuring the safety of its own residents.

Acting on a [motion](#) by Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas and Sheila Kuehl, the Board declared it would honor the United States' federal immigration policies and welcome refugees fleeing persecution in their home countries to adjust to a new, peaceful and productive life in the County.

The Board also approved sending a letter to President Barack Obama expressing support of federal efforts to help Syrians fleeing violence and oppression.

The motion noted 12 million people – almost half of Syria's population – have been displaced by terrorism, religious persecution, war and conflict. This includes about 7.6 million displaced within Syria's borders. The rest have been forced to flee to other countries. According to the State Department, 7 out of every 10 Syrian refugees are women and children.

In their motion, Supervisors Ridley-Thomas and Kuehl emphasized the County has "a strong tradition of not tolerating hate crimes, racial antagonism, stereotypes, prejudice and bias, especially in the wake of fear." They also stressed every precaution would be taken to ensure the safety of County residents.

"Refugees are subject to the strictest form of security screening of any class of traveler to the U.S. before they are allowed to enter, and are subject to extensive background, security and health checks," Supervisors Ridley-Thomas and Kuehl said in the motion. "The process is slow and long and is considered the toughest way to legally enter the United States."

They added, "We can protect public safety and honor our best American traditions at the same time."